

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-7 are pending in this application. Claims 3 and 5 are currently amended. Claims 1 and 2 are cancelled. In view of the following amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated over U.S. Patent No. 5,947,400 to Tsutsumi. Claims 1 and 2 have been cancelled, so this § 102(b) rejection is moot.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsutsumi in view of US 2002/0170997 to Furomoto. Claims 3 and 4 now depend from amended claim 5, which is believed to be allowable as described below. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the § 103(a) rejection of claims 3 and 4 be rescinded. Claim 3 has been amended to depend from amended claim 5.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claims 5-7 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim (claim 1), and noted that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 5 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claims 1 and 2. Claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 5, which is allowable as

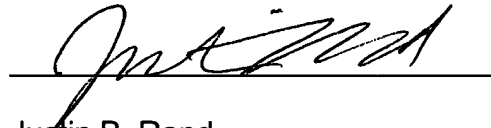
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amended, as it includes all of the limitations of claims 1, 2 and 5. Therefore, claims 6 and 7 are allowable as well.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, Applicant has overcome each of the rejections and objections. The application is therefore in condition for allowance. If, for any reason, the Examiner believes that the amendments and remarks do not put the claims in condition for allowance, the undersigned attorney can be reached at (312) 245-5394 to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin B. Rand", is written over a horizontal line.

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